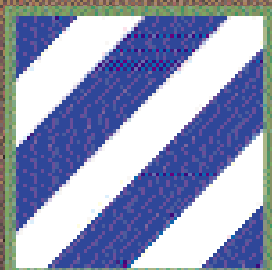


3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized)

**OPERATION IRAQI
FREEDOM**



March 18, 2004

3rd Inf. Div. deploys to Kuwait

Pfc. Emily J. Danial

Staff Writer

In January 2003, Soldiers in the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) were officially informed that they were headed for the Middle East to do their part in Operation Enduring Freedom.

"By now I'm sure everyone knows the entire 3rd Inf. Div. is deploying to Kuwait," said Maj. Gen. Buford C. Blount, then commanding general of the 3rd Inf. Div.. "It must be true because we all saw it announced on Fox News on New Years Eve.

"I know the departure is tough for families and friends," he said. "We saw the emotional goodbyes on TV here in Kuwait as Soldiers departed from Warner Robbins (Air Force Base) and Hunter Army Airfield."

Throughout the early months of

the year, a multitude of flights proceeded to carry the Marine Division's more than 20,000 Soldiers to the Middle East, where they continued to train in preparation for the possibility of war.

"We have put together a tremendous training plan that only the ranges and maneuver area of Kuwait can support," Blount said. "We will be ready if our Nation needs us."

Many Soldiers, although not particularly excited to deploy, said they were not surprised when they were given their orders.

Pfc. Samuel Winkler, a scout in E Troop, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, said, "Everybody knows and has to accept the fact that when they volunteer into the service they will be called upon to serve their country, and that's what I'm doing."



File photo

Sgt. Vincent Adams, Armored Vehicle Launching Bridge commander, ground guides an armored vehicle launching bridge into position.

Pfc. Emily J. Danial

Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth Torbert, 1/10 FA, hugs his 7-year-old son Alexander goodbye before heading to the plane that will take him to Kuwait for his part in Operation Enduring Freedom.



Pfc. Emily J. Danial

3rd Inf. Div. Soldiers board the aircraft that took them to Kuwait Jan. 6 from Hunter Army Airfield.



Pfc. Emily J. Danial

Toting their gear, troops begin to make their way out to the plane from the waiting room at the DAACG.

Marne Division trains for war

Spc. Katherine Robinson

Editor

The 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) deployed to Kuwait in January in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Although some elements of the division had been in-country as early as September, the majority of Marne Soldiers arrived shortly after the new year.

With tensions increasing and President George W. Bush and Iraq's President Saddam Hussein in a stand-off, neither willing to back down, the 3rd Inf. Div. trained hard in Kuwait for the war that loomed ever nearer on the horizon.

The division units conducted regular physical fitness training, desert tank tables, hot refuels and road marches, military operations on urbanized terrain, artillery live-fires, enemy prisoner of war, sniper, nuclear, biological and chemical attack, trench, and engineer training.

Despite the uncertainty of not knowing when or whether there would be a war, Marne Soldiers stepped up to the plate to prepare themselves for whatever might happen.

"I'm sure in the back of their minds, they're wondering what the future holds. I think these guys are very well trained, motivated and very serious about doing their job. I'm proud of the way they have stepped up to the challenge," said Capt. Jeff Zanelotti, B Battery, 1st Battalion, 3rd Air Defense Artillery commander.

As part of the training the division practiced "jumping" — quickly breaking down, relocating and building — its tactical operations center in preparation for rapid movement through Iraq.

Soldiers also conducted extensive



Spc. Adam Nuelken

An M270 Multiple Launch Rocket System shoots a rocket downrange during the Division Artillery live-fire exercise Feb. 13, 2003 at Udairi Range Complex. The 3rd Inf. Div. trained in Kuwait for months before the war.

maintenance on vehicles and equipment, since the desert sand was hard on tracks and weapons.

Meanwhile, hundreds of care packages flooded in for Soldiers from family members and supporting citizens.

Morale, Welfare and Recreation activities included performances by visiting entertainers, boxing smokers, an MWR tent complete with widescreen television and phone and internet cafes so Soldiers could stay in touch with loved ones.

Finally, after months of training and waiting to see what would happen, the call came. On March 20, the Division began to cross the border from Kuwait to Iraq, beginning Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Spc. Katherine Robinson

Spc. Adam Steve, an A Co., 1/3 Avn., crew chief, checks the stock number on a hell-fire missile at Camp Udairi in March, 2003.



Sgt. Akilah C. Clarke

Sgt. Jason Miller, a combat engineer with the 10th Eng. Bn., prepares a field-expedient Bangalore.



Spc. Adam Nuelken

Combat Engineers from the 10th Eng. Bn., use a grappling hook to pull back concertina wire. The engineers would then cut the wire to allow the infantry to pass.



Sgt. Mason T. Lowery

A Bradley provides support by fire to engineers setting up a MICLIC to clear the way for Task Force 1-30 Inf. during their live fire at Range 7 Jan. 25, 2003.

Morning shows in Kuwait boost morale

Sgt. Craig Zentkovich

NCOIC, Hunter Public Affairs Office

Spirits were high and smiles were abundant when three national morning shows visited Army camps in Kuwait in 2003 preceding Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In early February, CBS's "The Early Show," ABC's "Good Morning America" and Fox's "Fox and Friends" broadcast live from Camp New Jersey, Camp New York and Camp Pennsylvania respectively, to show friends and family in the states how well the soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) were doing.

"The Soldiers have been training very hard in pretty harsh conditions," said Maj. Gen. Buford C. Blount III, 3rd Inf. Div. commander. "This gives them the opportunity to let loose a little bit and say 'hi' to their loved ones back at home."

All the shows kicked off at 3 p.m. on their respective days so they could air live at 7 a.m., Eastern Standard Time.

Soldiers on the camps, whether sitting on vehicles or standing amongst the crowd, waved handwritten signs in the air with the hope that people back home would see their husbands, wives, sons and daughters on television.

A select few had the opportunity to get seconds, even minutes, in front of the camera to send a message to their families.

"This is something we can tell our kids about," said Pfc. Gonzalo Guerra, A Co., 1/64 Armor. Guerra and his brothers Alvaro and Maximiliano were all members of the 3rd Inf. Div. deployed to Kuwait. The three of them were interviewed by Good Morning America anchor Diane Sawyer, and afforded the opportunity to speak to their family at home live.

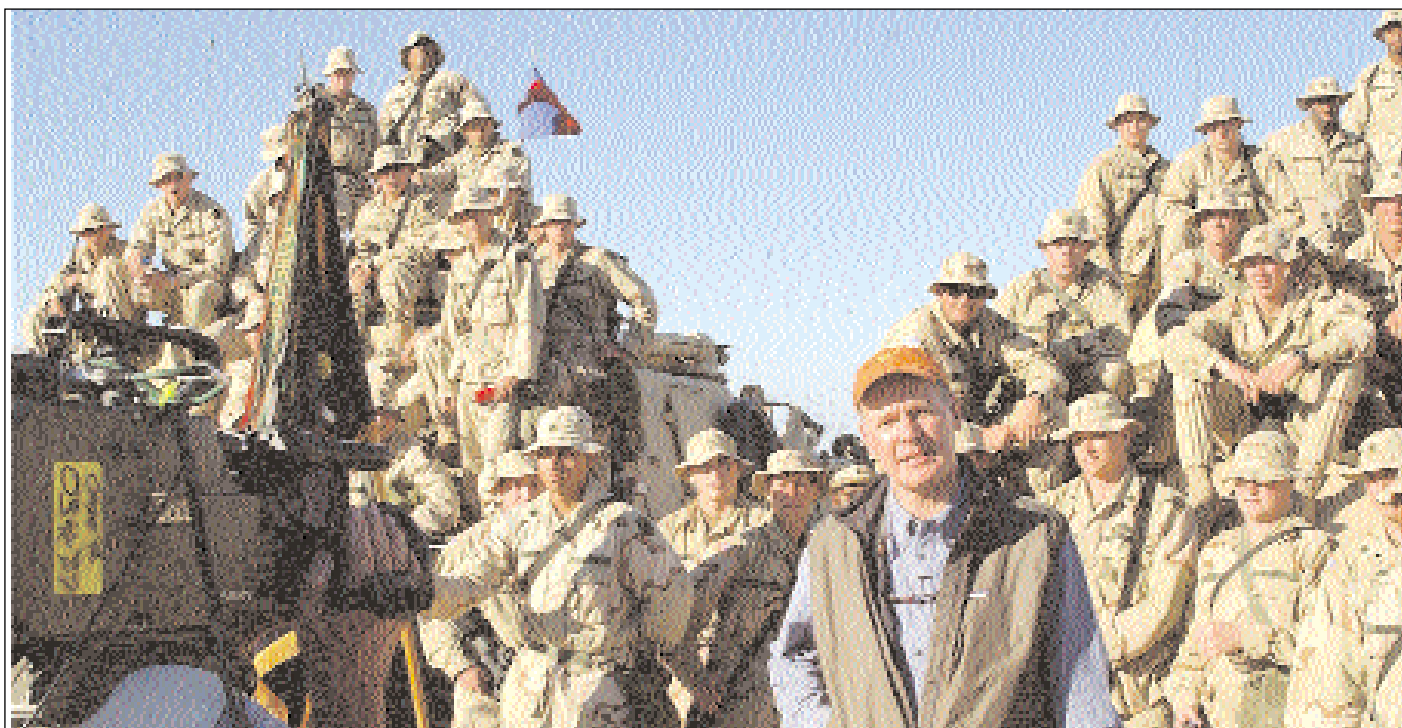
Sawyer and Harry Smith, The Early Show anchor, were overwhelmed by their experiences at the camps.

"This has been absolutely wonderful," Sawyer said. "I think people (in the states) should see what it's really like to spend five or six months out here — to work everyday, with no real time off and nowhere else to go when you do get that little time to yourself."

Smith said if he were writing a postcard home, it would say, "You'd be surprised at how well taken care of the troops are, even out in a hostile climate like this — 30 miles from the Iraqi border."

By 6 p.m., the respective crowds had dispersed, crews and equipment were packed, and all that was left to show of their presence was a detail cleaning the broadcast locations.

Overall, Blount said that the morning shows offered a "great representation of the 3rd Inf. Div. and all of our great Soldiers."



Photos by Sgt. Craig Zentkovich

Harry Smith, anchor for "The Early Show" on CBS, stands before hundreds of Soldiers for the live broadcast from Camp New Jersey Feb. 6, 2003.



(Above) A Soldier waves Old Glory high during the "Good Morning America" broadcast Feb. 7, 2003, from Camp New York, Kuwait.



Diane Sawyer interviews brothers Pfc. Maximiliano Guerra, C Co., 1/64 Armor, Pfc. Gonzalo Guerra, A Co., 1/64 Armor and Pfc. Alvaro Guerra, B Trp., 3/7 Cav., while they talk to their parents live at the ABC studios Feb. 7 2003, during the "Good Morning America" broadcast.



**Spc. Katherine Robinson
"Fox and Friends" anchor Brian Kilmeade broadcasts live from Camp Pennsylvania before crowds of cheering Soldiers in February, 2003.**

Raiders drive on during OIF

Sgt. Craig Zentkovich

NCOIC, Hunter Public Affairs Office

In January 2003, the 1st Brigade Combat Team arrived in Kuwait, uncertain of what the future held, with many questions yet to be answered.

Their mission was simple — deter Iraqi aggression in the region.

By March, following countless training exercises in the Kuwaiti desert and an ultimatum to Saddam Hussein from our commander-in-chief, the future seemed clear.

On the night of March 20, the questions were answered. Led by Task Force 3-69 Armor, the Raiders crossed the border into Iraq around 8 p.m. and began their march toward Baghdad.

In four-days time, the 1st BCT crossed the border, secured an airfield, convoyed 30 hours straight and traveled 300 kilometers. In addition, TF 2-7 Inf., TF 3-7 Inf., 1st Battalion, 41st Field Artillery Regiment and the 11th Eng. Bn. engaged Iraqi forces in lengthy battles that resulted in 248 enemy prisoners and no Raider Soldiers seriously injured.

For the next eight days,

the Raiders staged operations from an assembly area northwest of An Najaf. From March 25 to 27, during a sandstorm that resulted in 25-meter visibility, the brigade recon team and elements of TF 3-69 Armor and TF 3-7 Inf. fought around the clock with regular and unconventional Iraqi troops in Al Kifl — a northern suburb of An Najaf on the Euphrates River. The fighting resulted in scores of dead Iraqi troops, more than 50 enemy prisoners and no 1st BCT casualties.

Tragedy struck TF 2-7 Inf. on March 29 when a local Iraqi stopped at a checkpoint north of An Najaf and detonated an explosive device in the trunk of his car. Four Soldiers died. Staff Sgt. Chad Urquhart, squad leader of the Soldiers killed, said, "I just lost four brothers."

Three days later, the 1st BCT was staged and focused on one objective — Saddam International Airport. Around 2 a.m. on April 2, once again lead by TF 3-69 Armor, the Raiders pushed northward for 70 kilometers through the Karbala Gap and across the Euphrates River to within 30 kilometers of the



Photos by Sgt. Craig Zentkovich

The U.S. bombing and artillery campaign on Baghdad International Airport lasted for three days. The metal shell is all that remains of a plane that fell victim to air strikes April 1 through 3.

airport. The following day, under the cover of Air Force ordnance and 1/41 FA's artillery barrage, the Raiders moved in on the airport. After two days of fighting, many Iraqi troops were killed and captured, and buildings in and around the compound were secure. The airport, under coalition control, was renamed Baghdad International Airport.

"Americans should be proud of their fighting men and women," said Lt. Col. Ernest Marcone, TF 3-69 Armor com-

mander. "I am."

On April 9, Saddam Hussein's regime officially crumbled when Baghdad fell to Coalition forces led by the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized).

When President George W. Bush declared an end to major combat operations in Iraq, the Raiders were already two weeks into stabilization and support operations. For the next three months, the Soldiers of the 1st BCT secured areas in and around Baghdad while rebuilding many of its communities.



A TF 3-69 medic tends to a wounded Iraqi Soldier April 2 north of the Karbala Gap.



An elderly woman, suffering from a gunshot wound to the leg, is tended to by 1st BCT medics in Kifl, Iraq, March 27. She received the wound while traveling with enemy forces during a two-day battle in the town.



The sun sets on April 2, as Soldiers from Task Force 3-69 prepare for movement through the Karbala Gap in Central Iraq.

Spartans thunder through Iraq

Sgt. Mason T. Lowery

Staff Writer, Hunter Public Affairs

The Spartans' decisiveness, assertiveness and skill during Operation Iraqi Freedom started immediately after President George W. Bush addressed Americans and the world March 17, 2003 and gave Saddam Hussein 48 hours to get out of Iraq.

The 2nd Brigade Combat Team Soldiers moved out of their assembly area and crossed the Iraq border March 20.

From March 20 to 21, as the Brigade occupied Attack Position Appalling, the first hostile act of the ground war was committed as Iraq fired SCUD missiles into Kuwait. The Brigade began its combat operations on the evening of March 20 with a coordinated air, artillery, and ground attack to destroy enemy border operations and establish passage lanes.

From March 21 to 22, the Spartan Soldiers made history as they conducted a monumental attack into Southern Iraq, moving further and faster than any armored force. The Brigade covered 300 kilometers in 24 hours, posting itself deep in enemy territory prepared to continue the attack.

The Spartan Soldiers had their first significant enemy contact March 23.

From March 23 to 25, the Brigade fought Fedayeen forces as it attacked to Objective Rams. After securing this objective in order to facilitate occupation by Division and Corps support elements, the Brigade continued to advance north to Objective Spartans through small arms, rocket propelled grenade, and indirect fire from conventional and irregular forces that, while at times sustained, were largely not coordinated.

The Spartan Soldiers faced their first urban fight March 26 in An Najaf, where they relieved 3rd Battalion, 7th Cavalry of security of Euphrates River bridges. During this engagement, the Rogues



A statue of Saddam Hussein with its head blown off, signifies the end of his regime.



Photos by Sgt. Mason T. Lowery

B Co., 3/15 Inf., heads north March 18 as the president's patience wears thin.

(1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment) destroyed hundreds of irregular forces and numerous technical trucks.

The brigade secured Objective Spartan on March 31. E Battery, 9th Cavalry Scouts got the enemy's position, and multiple launch rocket systems and tanks did the rest.

From March 31 to April 1, the Spartans attacked to seize Objective Spartan. Task Force 4-64 Armor attacked to seize the Euphrates River crossing at Objective Murray in order to cause the commitment of enemy forces from the north and east.

On April 2, the brigade split into four battalions to fight in Karbala. The brigade was brought together at Objective Garth, a refuel point. The four battalions attacked and marched for two days straight.

From April 2 to 3, the Brigade initiated an attack north through Karbala in preparation for the attack across the Euphrates.

On April 4, the entire brigade converged on Objective Saints, the intersection of Highways 8 and 1, 10 miles from Baghdad, to control enemy movement to and from the city.

From April 3 to 4, with portions of the Brigade still moving through the Karbala Gap, Task Force 1-15 Inf. led the attack across the Euphrates River to seize Objective Saints. Task Force 1-64 followed and destroyed remnants of the Medina Division further south along Highway 8 with TF 4-64 destroying enemy forces along Highway 1. Task Force 3-15 Inf., operating under control of the Engineer Brigade, successfully repelled numerous counter-attacks on the crucial river-crossing site at Objective Peach.

'Thunder Runs' — quick trips from Saints to Baghdad International Airport, began on April 5.

On April 7 the Spartans attacked Baghdad. "It was the culminating tactical event marked by every element of the brigade under contact simultaneously," former 2nd Brigade Combat Team Commander Col. David G. Perkins explained. "We attacked straight into the city. We saw that the key to that was movement and masked fire. The result was we made it into the city and spent the night."

A few days later, the major combat operations were over.



Sgt. Matthew Gloxner, a B Co., 10th Eng. Soldier, clears a field around a Medina Division garrison April 4 outside Al Yusufyah, Iraq, where another massive weapons cache was found by 2nd BCT Soldiers.



Spartan Doc, Capt. Robert Meadows changes Sgt. Brian Cox's bandage on a shrapnel wound March 27 in the Iraqi desert.

3rd BCT seizes division's first objectives

Spc. Jacob Boyer

Staff Writer

After spending almost all of the preceding year in Kuwait, the 3rd Brigade Combat Team raced across southern Iraq to seize the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized)'s first objectives in and around Tallil Air Base March 21.

The brigade followed the 1st Brigade Combat Team through lanes in the berm that separated Kuwait from Iraq before 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment; 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment; and 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment attacked Objectives Firebird, Clay and Liberty, which consisted of the air base and several key roads and bridges in its immediate area. Moving in behind preparatory fires from 1st Battalion, 10th Field Artillery Regiment, Task Force 2-69 seized the Highway 1 bridge that led to An Nasiriyah to prevent enemy reinforcements. Despite initial resistance, many Iraqis surrendered as Task Forces 1-15 and 1-30 fought in and around the airfield.

"We were the first ones to cross the line of departure," said Maj. Tim Newsome, 3rd BCT operations officer. "We were the first ones to have contact and we were going to set the conditions for the success of the rest of the division and the follow-on forces that would come behind us."

After securing the objectives, the brigade allowed the rest of the division to pass it and move toward As Samawah. It was relieved in place by the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force.

Task Force 1-15 involved in fighting around As Samawah, but 3rd BCT's next major action would be the containment of Karbala April 1 as 1st BCT moved through the Karbala Gap toward Objective Peach, the Euphrates River crossing just south of Baghdad. 3rd BCT Soldiers surrounded the city, allowing the rest of the division to pass through the area.

Task Force 1/15, attached to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team during the battle for Objective Saints, took the intersection of Highways 1 and 8 south of Baghdad. Scouts from TF 1-15 led the way through tight roads and potentially dangerous towns between Objectives Peach and Saints.

After 1st BCT seized Baghdad International



Photo by Staff Sgt. Brian Sipp

A HEMTT ammo carrier for C Co., 1/15 Inf. of Task Force 2-69 Armor, explodes after being struck during an RPG attack outside the Arab Petroleum Training Institute.

Airport, 3rd BCT conducted a forward passage of lines with 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment April 6 and attacked to the northwest of Baghdad, known as Objective Titans. They defended several bridges and kept Iraqi reinforcements from entering the city as 2nd BCT conducted the Thunder Run April 7. The brigade fought off several Iraqi counterattacks, including an attack on its tactical operations center, over the course of April 6 and 7.

"Obviously it was a very confusing situation," said Col. Dan Allyn, 3rd BCT commander during the war. "We had been through direct fire engagements throughout the day. I think everybody had finally taken a breath and said, 'Okay, we own this ground.' Suddenly, within about 45 minutes of consolidating, we received small arms direct fire from the west and the northwest."

The brigade was supported throughout the war by 203rd Main Support Battalion, which made sure the front line troops got the food and supplies they needed, and 317th Engineer Battalion.



Photos by Spc. Adam Nuelken

Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Jones, squad leader with C Co., TF 1/15 Inf., covers his squad as they clear a room in a building east of Karbala.



A building at the Arab Petroleum Training Institute burns while a Bradley Fighting Vehicle from C Co., 1-15 Inf. with TF 2-69 Armor, pulls security. The flames were put out before the building was destroyed.



A TF 2-69 Armor tank heads through Iraq towards its next battle during the war.

4th Brigade augmented ground troops

Spc. Jacob Boyer

Staff Writer

As the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) moved toward Baghdad during the initial phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the helicopters of 4th Brigade were with it all the way, providing close air support, reconnaissance, re-supply and casualty evacuation to the division's forward combat assets.

The brigade's mission started the minute the division crossed the international border between Kuwait and Iraq. AH-64 Apache Longbows from B and C Companies, 1st Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment moved forward of the division's ground units to observe incoming artillery fire on Iraqi outposts near the border, said Col. Curtis D. Potts, 4th Brigade commander. After the artillery fire ended, the Apaches moved in and destroyed any targets that survived the initial barrage. The first Hellfire RF missile fired in combat destroyed one of the outposts that night.

The Apaches continued to provide close air support throughout the push to Baghdad, giving crucial support in the battles for As Samawah, Objective Peach and Baghdad itself.

But they were not 4th Brigade's only contribution to the fight. UH-60 Blackhawks from 2nd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment and the 507th Medical Company (Air Ambulance) flew almost constant missions to move casualties from the front lines to medical units in the rear, said Capt. Brian Box, 507th executive officer. The 507th alone flew 19 missions in the war's first 24 hours.

"The 507th has been doing Herculean work," Potts said. "When I went to bed (March 22) they'd run 10 missions, and they've run almost as many since then. They're good pilots, and they're dedicated to what they do. Their pilots are always right by the (tactical operations center) waiting for their next mission."

The brigade's Blackhawks also acted as command and control platforms for both Potts and Maj. Gen. Buford C. Blount III, division commander. Potts said he called in a lot of close air support from the Air Force's A-10s during several battles.

All the helicopters were kept operating by forward ammunition and re-supply points set up throughout the theater by the 603rd Aviation Support Battalion.

As the division settled in to stability and support operations in both Baghdad and Fallujah, the brigade's Blackhawks continued to provide command and control, re-supply and medical evacuations throughout the region.

Although it is a part of 4th Brigade, 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment had its own mission as the division's cavalry element. They made several feints toward the Euphrates River as the Marne Division moved north to confuse the Iraqi military. 3/7 was involved in battles at As Samawah, An Najaf and Baghdad.



Photos by Spc. Jacob Boyer

An AH-64 Apache Longbow from 1/3 Avn. flies a security mission April 12. The battalion's helicopters fired the first Hellfire RF missile in combat during the war.



(Above) Pfc. Gilbert Henderson, HHC, 1/3 Avn., makes an adjustment to the 30 mm cannon on an AH-64 Apache helicopter at a forward ammunition and refueling point run by 4th Bde. near Jalibah in late March.

(Left) A 3/7 Cav. Soldier smashes the light on an Iraqi T-72 tank following the surrender of an Iraqi general April 12 in Ar Ramadi.



A UH-60 Blackhawk from B Co., 2/3 Avn. takes off on a mission from a site south of Baghdad April 5. 4th Bde. utility helicopters flew numerous medical evacuations, re-supply and command and control missions during the division's drive north to Baghdad.

DREAR provides Marne Soldiers beans, bullets

Sp. Katherine Robinson

Editor

Beans and bullets. Without these things, the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) could not have fought its way to Baghdad. Without fuel, food, ammunition, repair parts and the other classes of supply, there would have been no war.

The division rear element followed the division main into Iraq to provide these supplies. Forward support battalions transported the supplies from the forward logistics base to the combat units, making sure the Marne warriors had what they needed to fight.

Division Support Command encompassed the DREAR, along with 24th Corps Support Group, according to Command Sgt. Maj. Tony D. Bridgewater, DISCOM command sergeant major.

"DISCOM's mission is to support the brigade combat teams — getting logistics from V Corps down to the BCTs," Bridgewater said.

The 24th CSG mission was to primarily support non-divisional customers in 3rd Inf. Div. areas of operation, but also to augment DISCOM's support of 3rd Inf. Div. Soldiers, said Col. Roberta A. Woods, 24th CSG commander.

DREAR, which also included many attached units, supported the division in many forms, from fuel farms — fields of 50,000 gallon fuel bags, set up at every position to supply bulk fuel for units — to water purification teams, vehicle repair, Meals, Ready to Eat and heat and serve meals, sundry packs, and parts for damaged equipment.

Also with DREAR were psychological operations units who broadcast a radio station from each position, Civil Affairs Soldiers who interacted with and helped the Iraqi civilians, 1st Battalion, 3rd Air Defense Artillery avengers to provide extra security, and explosive ordnance disposal teams.

Wherever the division went, DREAR was right behind, providing the lifeblood it needed to maintain the fight.



Photos by Sp. Katherine Robinson

Sgt. John Joslyn, a metal worker with B Co., 3rd FSB welds a cracked water buffalo near Forward Logistics Base Dogwood in April.



Pvt. 2 Colt Johnson, a petroleum supply specialist with 11th ADA out of Fort Bliss, Texas, (far left) helps Pfc. Chris Wilcox and Pfc. Ian Foss, 59th QM Co., hook up a hose to Johnson's fuel tanker at a fuel farm near the DREAR logistics base in Iraq.



Staff Sgt. Brian Huggins, D Btry., 1/3 ADA team chief from Silver Street, N.C., sits atop the turret of an Avenger March 27. The Avengers assigned to the DREAR and 703rd MSB provided early warning and defense from air and ground attacks.



Maj. Jamie Eaker, 3rd Inf. Div. Deputy SJA, shortly after the school's reopening hands out cookies to students of Al Baroodi school Monday during a Civil Affairs visit.



Spc. Katherine Robinson



Spc. Katherine Robinson

Sgt. Daniel Nardy, HHB 1/41 FA, cleans a wound on an Iraqi boy's foot after he stepped on concertina wire outside Abu Haneefa mosque in Baghdad.

An Iraqi boy gives American Soldiers a thumbs up sign in Karbala just days after the 3rd Inf. Div. fought its way through the city during the first few days of the division's sweep toward Baghdad.

Soldiers stop fighting, begin to rebuild

Spc. Katherine Robinson

Editor

Major combat operations were over. But the city of Baghdad, on whose streets the war was waged, was in a state of rebirth. Less than two months after the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) first rolled its tanks and Bradleys into Iraq's capital, its citizens were still trying to get back on their feet, but the military was there to help.

After combat, Soldiers from 3rd Inf. Div. shifted focus to support and stabilization operations in an effort to rebuild the war-ravaged country.

The Soldiers conducted foot patrols and mounted patrols in every sector of the city, scanning the streets for signs of danger. They also had fixed sentries outside many gas stations and mosques maintaining the peace. They arrested looters, curfew breakers, citizens with weapons and drunk and disorderly citizens.

But their job didn't just consist of policing the areas. They also spent much of their time rebuilding.

Soldiers helped refurbish and reopen schools, hospitals, soccer fields, zoos and even amusement parks. They distributed hundreds of soccer balls, school supplies, air conditioners, fans, medical supplies and thousands of gallons of propane fuel.



Spc. Adam Nuelken

Cpl. Nicholas Lakin, ammo team chief for C Btry., TF 1-9 FA, keeps a watchful eye while working to control the crowds getting their liquid propane gas. Distributing propane to Iraqi citizens was one of the many things Soldiers did as part of support and stabilization operations after major combat operations ended.



Sgt. Craig Zentkovich

Staff Sgt. James Phillips and Sgt. 1st Class J.D. Caldwell, both part of 1st Brigade Combat Team's intelligence office, process information for local residents applying for work as interpreters for the 1st BCT April 23.

They met with the sheiks and imams in each neighborhood, to determine what was best for its inhabitants. They also helped restore power and water to many neighborhoods.

Task Force Neighborhood, a V Corps community improvement program, along with Iraqi citizens, cleaned trash and debris from neighborhoods and stadiums that were damaged both during the war and afterward, when looters ran rampant in Baghdad.

The transition from wartime to

peacekeeping wasn't easy for many of the Soldiers.

"Before, just about everybody you saw wanted to do you bodily harm," said Sgt. 1st Class Dwayne Anderson, 1st Battalion, 41st Field Artillery fire support noncommissioned officer. "Now you see people waving and offering you cigarettes ... that's an extremely tough transition."

One of Anderson's Soldiers, Sgt. Daniel Nardy, added, "I'd rather be doing this than fighting a war."

2nd BCT takes new mission in Fallujah

Sgt. Mason T. Lowery

Staff Writer, Hunter Public Affairs Office

FALLUJAH, Iraq — Spartan Brigade Soldiers rolled through An Najaf, rumbled through Karbala and thundered into Baghdad to help finish the war in 21 days. Baghdad fell to the Spartans in a day and two days later was under control.

Their success resulted in 2nd Brigade being given a follow-on mission, about a month later, to quell another hot spot — Fallujah.

Col. David G. Perkins, the former 2nd Bde. commander, said the focus of the mission was to provide a safe and secure environment to the people of Fallujah and enable a quick return to normalcy.

To achieve the goals, the Soldiers were out on patrol the very first night they got into Fallujah.

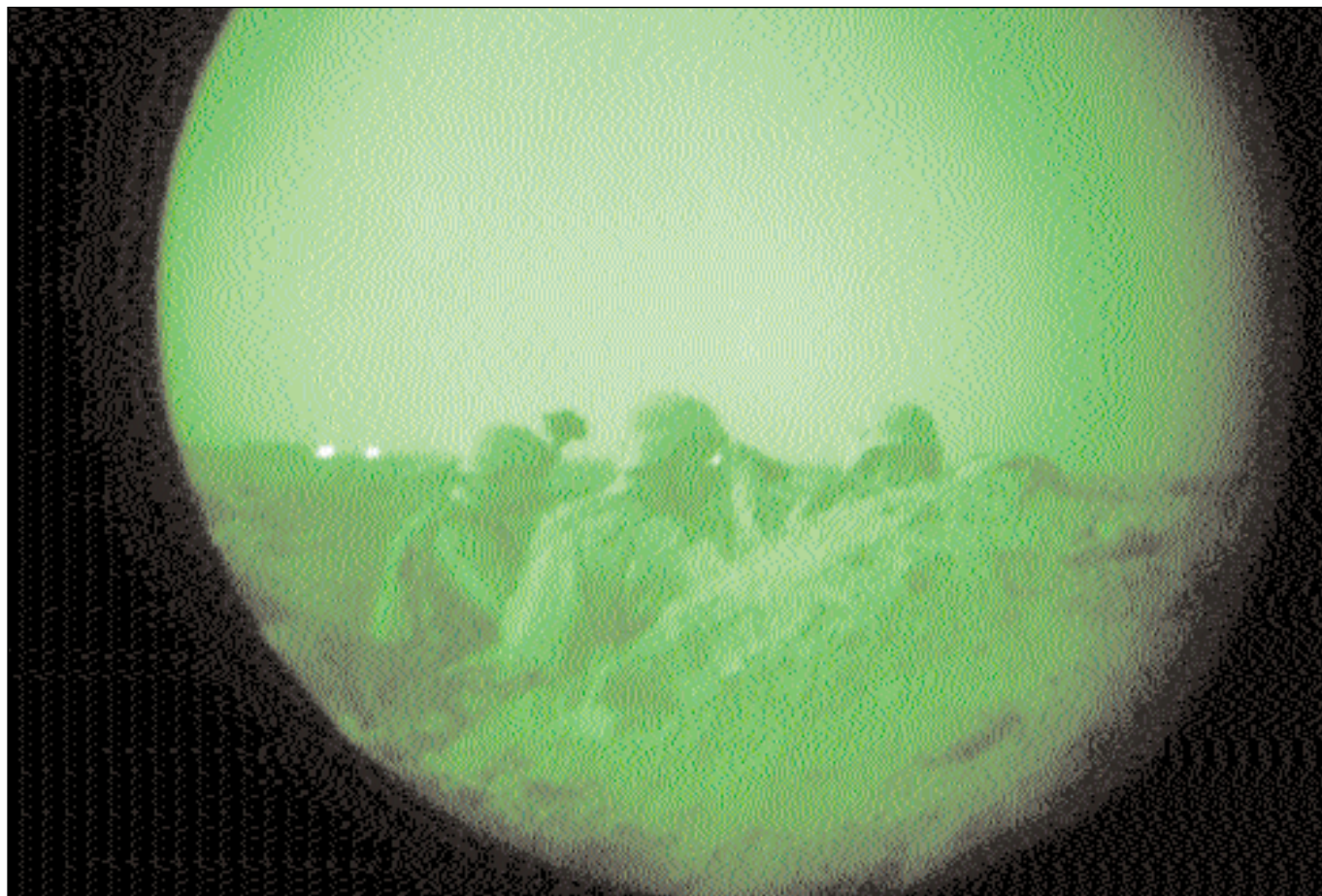
Capt. Matthew Morgan, 2nd BCT battle captain, said that the brigade's leaders had meetings with the community's religious and industrial leaders and worked very closely with them to make sure the people of Fallujah could start governing their city without the looting and petty crimes prevalent after the fall of the Saddam Hussein regime.

A big part of the Fallujah mission was training the Fallujah Police Department to operate on its own. With the help of 3rd Military Police Company and other elements of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, the Fallujah police force made itself stronger and more capable.

Another part of the mission for the Soldiers was letting the locals know they were there to help. Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery went on daily patrols. On one patrol, they visited three schools, two mosques and one potato and onion warehouse.

The 1/9 Soldiers had help from 1st Battalion, 3rd Air Defense Artillery Soldiers. They provided Soldiers and firepower at guard points along 1/9 Soldiers' route.

Part of the peace process in Fallujah involved getting rid of weapons. Rocket — propelled grenades, missiles and mor-



Sgt. Mason T. Lowery

2nd BCT Soldiers prepare for Spartan Scorpion, a massive raid that took place in Fallujah in July.

tars; these were only some of the types of weapons and unexploded ordnance lying in and around Fallujah.

The 10th Engineer Battalion, with help from the 890th Engineer Battalion, a National Guard unit from Picayune, Miss., spent their days collecting and destroying dangerous ordnance for the safety of both Soldiers and civilians.

Judge Advocate General, 3rd Military Police and 103rd Military Intelligence Soldiers helped the Iraqi legal system run again, but stayed out of the actual proceedings, Capt. Michael Scionti, JAG Judicial Assessment Team, said.

The city's infrastructure was in bad shape before the war even began. The Engineer Brigade worked to fix it. They provided generators for the treatment plants and repaired the lines that carry water throughout the city, said Ahmed Jassam, Fallujah's engineer for water plant projects.

Even with all Spartan Soldiers were doing to help the people of Fallujah, Baath party members remained in the area intent on stopping their progress. "We've seen very positive results in the past two weeks," Morgan said at the time. The Spartans were relieved in August by the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment.

Spc. Katherine Robinson

(Right) Spc. Daniel Keene, a combat medic with A Btry., 1/9 FA, checks a little boy's pulse at the battalion's medical treatment facility for children in a small village July 11.



Sgt. Mason T. Lowery

Command Sgt. Maj. Bob Gallagher, 3-15 Inf., pauses during a raid in Fallujah.



Spc. Katherine Robinson

Sgt. Ronald Fuller, 3rd MP Co., portrays a driver during a traffic stop, while Staff Sgt. Sean Sullivan, B Co., 411th CA Bn., demonstrates how to approach him during a class for Iraqi policemen.





Spc. Jonathan M. Stack

Supporters of 3rd Inf. Div. Soldiers walk the last mile to complete the distance to Kuwait/Iraq and back. They walked more than 15,000 miles.

FRGs provide support, information during deployment

Sgt. R. James Piper

Staff Writer

While the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) was deployed to Kuwait and Iraq, family readiness groups played a crucial role in supporting family members and providing timely information.

"FRGs were vitally important during deployment and war because they served as the primary source of information for families," said Jan Grimsley, 1st Brigade FRG leader. "In serving as a consistent source of reliable information, FRGs established themselves as an integral part of mission readiness and capability."

The brigade would send information via e-mail that they received from unit commanders and also post it to battalion FRG Web sites.

"We worked diligently to ensure consistent dissemination of information from the commanders through the rear detachments and FRGs and family members began to view them as their primary source of information," Grimsley said.

She added that the e-mail updates set the stage for a standard information flow, and although rumors were being spread, unless it came through the FRG or the rear detachment, the information was considered unconfirmed.

Melissa Gardner, FRG leader for F Troop, 3rd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, echoed Grimsley on how her job was focused on providing information and rumor control.

"It seems there would be a story and it would get bigger and bigger, and by the time it got to the end of the chain, it wasn't even the same story," she said. "I think getting information out and who it was about, who applied to and how it affected them was probably the most important aspect and probably the hardest aspect of the FRG during the war."

Getting information to the families was the main focus for the FRG leaders, but the groups also worked to provide social and emotional support to the families.

"Monthly we would get together so we could share what was going on with people that really understand," said Anne Carlisle, family readiness group leader for B Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment.

Gardner said, "It's nice to be surrounded by people who are going through the same thing. Then you know you are not the only one going crazy."

The Hinesville and Savannah communities both reached out to the families during the buildup to and during the war in Iraq.

"The geographic proximity of our community to Fort Stewart makes it easy for the Soldiers and families assigned to Fort Stewart to be woven into the fabric of our community," said Hinesville Mayor Thomas Ratcliffe. "They go to church with us, they go to school with us ... so it becomes more like the military community is simply a set of neighbors for the civilian community."

Gardner believes that many of the spouses at Hunter Army Airfield were surprised by the support from Savannah. Not because the city has not been supportive in the past, but because as an Army community, the families are used to supporting each other and looking inward for everything.

"We were surprised how much, without asking, that Savannah would come in and offer," Gardner said. "But, it was so nice to have someone besides the next Army person looking at you and acknowledging that what you are going through is a hard time."

"I think that was a huge morale booster for a lot of people ..., and I think people never thought people (outside of the military) would ever understand because it's a totally different lifestyle," she said.

Ratcliffe said, "Our civilian responsibility whether we are in Hinesville or somewhere else is similar as we look at our responsibility as citizens of the country to support that same effort, but from a civilian perspective."

The mayor added, "We like to think that we have a role as a civilian community in support of Fort Stewart's mission, and supporting those that remain behind is part of that role."



Sgt. Sam Hoffman

Castrol Car Care on Frank Cochran Drive offers a free 20-point inspection for military personnel.



Sgt. R. James Piper

Families and friends of Soldiers deployed from the 3rd Inf. Div. encourage passing cars to show their support by honking.



Sgt. R. James Piper

Families and friends of the 3/7th Cav. show their support for deployed Soldiers March 29 at the intersection of General Screven Way and Highway 84. Soldiers, families and friends cheered for their loved ones from 1 to 4 p.m.

3rd ID returns home

Spc. Jonathan M. Stack

Associate Editor

June was a great month for Fort Stewart. It was the month Soldiers began to return home from Operation Iraqi Freedom.

3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) Soldiers deployed in January 2003 and finally were returning to their families and other loved ones.

After almost every flight there was a welcome home ceremony where wives, husbands, children, parents and friends stood waiting to reunite with their Soldiers.

"I'm proud of him and ... have been behind him 100 percent in everything he has done for the Army and our freedom," said Fran Moore, the wife of Sgt. 1st Class Charles Moore, from the 103rd Military Intelligence Battalion, and one of many spouses expectantly waiting the arrival of her loved one.

She added that she was excited and ecstat-

ic to have him returning home.

At every ceremony there was a representative of the command group to welcome home the troops and show their appreciation.

"To the family and friends who are here, we appreciated the support that you have given to your Soldier," Brig. Gen. Jose D. Riojas, assistant division commander (Support) said. "To the Dog Face Soldiers, the world watched you all ... and marvelled at your sacrifice and victory."

Sgt. Oscar DeMoss Jr., a returning Soldier, was greeted by his wife, Lakeisha, his two daughters Lanaisha and Laneisha, both 8 years old, and two sons Oscar 4 years old and Octavius, 2 years old at a return ceremony.

"It's been hard dealing with my husband being gone. I had four children to worry about, but it's his job," Lakeisha said. "I'm glad it's over and he made it home."



Pfc. Chris Stephens

Family members and friends celebrate the return of their loved ones.



Pfc. Emily J. Danial

Soldiers line up to turn in weapons after arriving at Hunter.



Spc. Jonathan M. Stack

Maj. Gen. Buford C. Blount, former 3rd Inf. Div. commander, leads the returning colors and Soldiers onto Cottrell Field during a Welcome Home Ceremony Aug. 22.



Spc. Jonathan M. Stack
Staff Sgt. Herman Smith kisses his daughter Jocelyn, 4, as wife Selena waits for her turn after the units' welcome home ceremony July 16 at a Hunter Army Airfield hangar

Thanks from a grateful nation

Spc. Katherine Robinson

Editor

"You led the fighting into Baghdad the day the statue of (Saddam Hussein) was pulled down."

A resounding "Hooah!" from the thousands of Soldiers gathered on Trent Field the morning of Sept. 12 answered these words, spoken by President of the United States George W. Bush.

Bush visited Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield to welcome home Soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) and to thank their families and community for continuing support.

Crowds of supporters, military and civilian, greeted him waving flags and cheering. Georgia Senators Zell Miller and Saxby Chambliss, as well as Congressmen Max Burns and Jack Kingston accompanied Bush on the trip.

Backdropped by several hundred Soldiers in desert camouflage uniforms, Bush addressed the crowd.

"After a long deployment, the Third ID is now home. America is grateful for your devoted service in hard conditions. America is grateful to the men and women right here on this base who supported your mission. And we're especially grateful to our

military families," Bush said.

Bush also presented the Presidential Unit Citation to Maj. Gen. Buford C. Blount III, 3rd Inf. Div. commanding general.

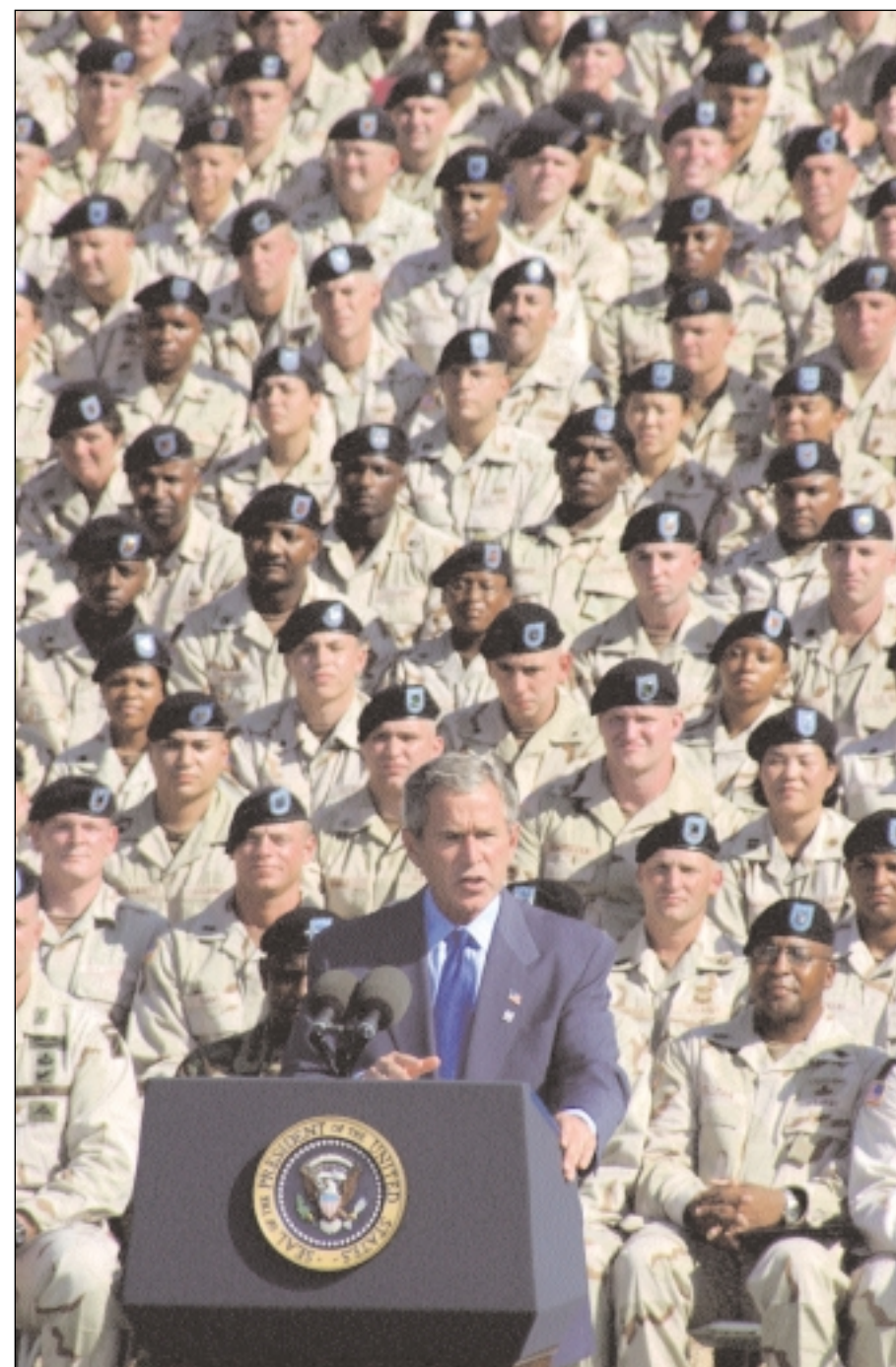
"You made history," Bush told the division Soldiers. "You made our nation proud. And you deserve the Presidential Unit Citation."

The citation was the division's second. The first was awarded after World War II, for a grueling two-week fight in the winter of 1945.

Bush also honored the Soldiers who died during OIF. "You know the names of some who fought for our country and didn't come home; who died in the line of duty. You remember them as comrades and friends," he told the division. "This nation will remember them for their unselfish courage, for their sacrifice in a time of danger to America. We honor their memory.

After the ceremony the president accompanied Blount to the Fort Stewart Headquarters building, where he met with the families who lost loved ones in Iraq.

"America counts on the men and women who have stepped forward as volunteers in the cause of freedom," Bush said in his closing statement. "Thank you for the credit and honor you bring to our country every day."



Pfc. Benjamin T. Brody

President George W. Bush addresses the 3rd Inf. Div. Soldiers Sept. 12, shortly after the division returned from Iraq. Bush thanked the Soldiers for a job well done, and presented the division with the Presidential Unit Citation.



Spc. Katherine Robinson

Bush greets 3rd Inf. Div. commanding general Maj. Gen. Buford C. Blount III before addressing the division.



Pfc. Benjamin T. Brody

Bush waves to the crowd before descending from the stage to shake hands.



Spc. Katherine Robinson

A little girl shows her patriotism prior to the president's speech at Trent Field.



In Memory...



Capt. James Francis Adamouski
B Co., 2/3 Avn.
Springfield, Va.
April 2



Capt. Neil Aitken
HNB, 1/41 FA
Belleville, Pa.
April 4



Spc. Edward John Anguiano
B Co., 3rd FSB
Brownsville, Texas
March 23



Pfc. Wilfred D. Bellard
C Co., 1/41 FA
Lake Charles, La.
April 4



Spc. Joel L. Bertoldie
HHC, 4/64 Armor
Independence, Miss.
July 18



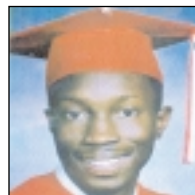
Staff Sgt. Stevon A. Booker
A Co., 1/64 Armor
Apollo, Pa.
April 5



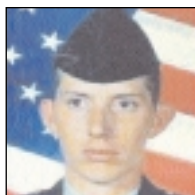
Spc. Matthew G. Boule
B Co., 2/3 Avn.
Dracut, Mass.
April 2



Cpl. Henry L. Brown
HHC, 1/64 Armor
Natchez, Miss.
April 8



Staff Sgt. George E. Buggs
HHC, 3rd FSB
Barnwell, S.C.
March 23



Spc. Ryan G. Carlock
416 Trans. Co.
Colchester, Ill.
Sept. 9



Pfc. Jonathan Marshall Cheatham
489 Eng. Bn.
Camden, Mass.
July 26



Sgt. Micheal T. Crockett
B Co., 3/7 Inf.
Soperton, Ga.
July 14



Spc. Daniel F. Cunningham
C Btry., 1/41 FA
Lewiston, Maine
April 4



Cpl. Micheal R. Curtin
A Co., 2/7 Inf.
Howell, N.J.
March 29



Sgt. 1st Class Wilbert Davis
HHC, 3/69 Armor
Tampa, Fla.
April 3



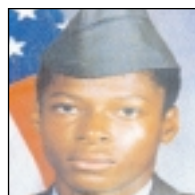
1st Sgt. Joe J. Garza
HHC, 1/30 Inf.
Robstown, Texas
April 28



Chief Warrant Officer 4 Erik A. Halvorsen
B Co., 2/3 Avn.
Bennington, Vt.
April 2



Staff Sgt. Nathaniel Hart Jr.
416 Trans. Co.
Midway, Ga.
July 28



Staff Sgt. Terry W. Hemingway
C Co., 1/15 Inf.
Willingboro, N.J.
April 10



Staff Sgt. Lincoln D. Hollinsaid
B Co., 11th Eng. Bn.
Malden, Ill.
April 7



Pvt. 1st Class Gregory P. Huxley Jr.
B Co., 317th Eng. Bn.
Forestport, N.Y.
April 6



Chief Warrant Officer 2 Scott Jamar
B Co., 2/3 Avn.
Granbury, Texas
April 2



Sgt. Troy David Jenkins
B Co., 3/187 Inf.
Ridgecrest, Calif.
April 19



Pvt. 2 Devon Dimilo Jones
C Btry., 1/41 FA
San Diego, Calif.
April 4



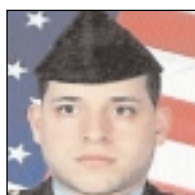
1st Lt. Jeffery Joseph Kaylor
C Btry., 1/39 FA
Clifton, Va.
April 7



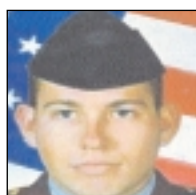
Capt. Edward Jason Korn
HHC, 4/64 Armor
Savannah, Ga.
April 3



Sgt. 1st Class John Winston Marshall
HHC, 3/15 Inf.
Los Angeles, Calif.
April 7



Spc. Gil Mercado
HHC, 3/187 Inf.
Hoboken, N.J.
April 13



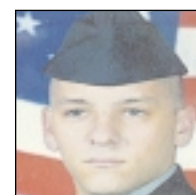
Pfc. Jason Michael Meyer
B Co., 11th Eng. Bn.
Swartz Creek, Mich.
April 7



Pfc. Anthony Scott Miller
HHC, 2nd Bde.
San Antonio, Texas
April 7



Spc. George A. Mitchell Jr.
HHC, 2nd Bde.
Antioch, W. Va.
April 7



Spc. Donald Samuel Oaks Jr.
C Btry., 3/13 FA
Harbor Creek, Pa.
April 3



Master Sgt. William Lee Payne
HHC, 2/70 Armor
Watervliet, Mich.
May 16



Sgt. Michael Francis Pederson
B Co., 2/3 Avn.
Flint, Mich.
April 2



Pvt. 2 Kelley Stephen Prewitt
HHC, 2/69 Armor
Centerpoint, Ala.
April 6



Sgt. 1st Class Randall Scott Rehn
C Btry., 3/13 FA
Niwo, Colo.
April 3



Pfc. Diego Fernando Rincon
HHC, 1st Bde
Mosquera, Colombia
March 29



Sgt. Todd James Robbins
C Btry., 3/13th FA
Flint, Mich.
April 3



Pfc. Marlin Tyrone Rockhold
B Co., 3/7 Inf.
Cincinnati, Ohio
May 8



Spc. Gregory Paul Sanders
B Co., 3/69 AR
Hobart, Indiana
March 24



Pfc. Charles Marques Simms
3rd MP Bn.
Miami, Fla.
Oct. 3



Chief Warrant Officer 3 Eric Allen Smith
B Co., 2/3 Avn.
Rochester, N.Y.
April 2



Spc. Jeremiah David Smith
1/34 Armor, 1st Inf. Div.
Odessa, Mo.
May 26



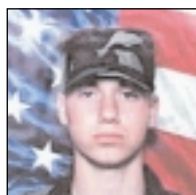
Sgt. 1st Class Paul Ray Smith
B Co., 11th Eng. Bn.
El Paso, Texas
April 4



Sgt. Roderic Antoine Solomon
HHC, 2/7 Inf.
Fort Bragg, N.C.
March 28



Staff Sgt. Robert Anthony Stever
HHC, 3/15 Inf.
Pendleton, Ore.
April 8



Spc. Brandon Scott
671st Eng. Bn.
Portland, Ore.
March 22



Pfc. Micheal R. Creighton-Weldon
HHC, 2/7 Inf.
Palm Bay, Fla.
March 29



Sgt. Eugene Williams
A Co., 2/7 Inf.
Brooklyn, N.Y.
March 29



David Bloom
NBC
April 6



Jeremy Little
NBC
July 7



Michael Kelly
Atlantic Monthly
April 3



Julio Anguita
Spanish News
El Mundo
April 7



Christian Liebig
German News
Focus
April 7

... of those who gave their lives



Courtesy photo



Sgt. Mason T. Lowery



Sgt. Mason T. Lowery



Spc. Jonathan M. Stack



Sgt. Mason T. Lowery